

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 263 804

HE 018 846

AUTHOR Morsi, Mohamed Monir; Al-Kobaisi, Abdullah J.
TITLE University Education in Qatar: A Case Study.
INSTITUTION Qatar Univ., Doha. Educational Research Centre.
REPORT NO ERC-68
PUB DATE Jul 84
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the World Congress on Comparative Education (5th, Paris, France, July 2-6, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Education; *Arabs; Case Studies; College Buildings; College Faculty; College Graduates; College Programs; College Students; Departments; *Foreign Countries; *Higher Education; *Islamic Culture; *State Universities
IDENTIFIERS *Arabian Gulf Region; Middle East; *Qatar; University of Qatar

ABSTRACT

The development of the University of Qatar, which is located in the Western Arabian Gulf, is described. The only higher education (tertiary) institution, the university is public with an independent structure and budget. In addition to its academic studies and preparation of graduates for work, the university seeks to preserve the Islamic and Qatari cultural heritage. Additional principles underlie Qatar college studies: university education is free; male and female students are separated in every aspect of university activities; academic freedom is guaranteed within the Arab and Islamic traditions; Arabic is the language of instruction, whenever possible; employment of Qataris is guaranteed after graduation; the university is publicly funded, within the general budget of the state. Since its establishment as a college of education in 1973, the university has grown in size and structure, and currently comprises four research centers and five faculties: education, humanities and social sciences, science, Islamic Studies, and engineering. Departments under each division are identified, and information is provided on university administration, access to higher education, academic programs and degrees, students and scholarships, academic achievement, graduates, teaching staff, and new buildings. (SW)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *



STATE OF QATAR
UNIVERSITY OF QATAR

ED263804

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN QATAR

A Case Study

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

*Educational Research
Centre*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

* Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ministry of
Education

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN QATAR

A Case Study

- Mohamed Monir Morsi, Ph.D.
Professor of Education & Director of the Educational Research
Centre - University of Qatar
- Abdullah J. Al-Kobaisi, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Education & Assistant President -
University of Qatar

Paper presented to the Vth World Congress on Comparative Education -
Paris, July 2 - 6, 1984

Basic Facts

- Qatar is a peninsula situated on the Western coast of the Arabian Gulf.
- Its area is about eleven thousand square kilometres.
- The population is about 200.000, half of whom live in the capital, Doha.
- The official religion is Islam and Arabic is the national language.
- It has been an independent, sovereign state since 1971.
- It has been a member of the U.N. since 1971.
- It is a member of OPEC.
- Its present ruler, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, was the first Minister of Education.

Introduction

There was no public school system in Qatar before the year 1952. However, as early as 1913, schooling was initiated on a very limited scale by individuals in religious one-room schools (*Kuttab*). It was not until 1952 that the Government started to shoulder some responsibility for education, by establishing the first public primary school. In fact, the origin of the present school system goes back to 1956, when the first Minister of Education was appointed. Since then, the school system has undergone steady expansion.

A brief description of the development of the University of Qatar would help understand our presentation on university education in Qatar. This is simply because the University is the only institution for higher learning on the tertiary level. Historically, tertiary education started in 1973, with the establishment of two faculties of education — one for males, the other for females. The University was inaugurated in June 1977 by proclamation of a State Law. It stipulates, that the University of Qatar is a public academic and cultural institution with an independent structure and budget, and that the University would be concerned with all aspects of learning and scientific research, with the preparation of specialized manpower and the preservation and nurture of Islamic and Qatari cultural heritage.

Despite the relatively short history of the University, it has gained wide recognition at the regional and international levels. It enjoys the membership of the Association of Arab Universities and the International Association of Universities.

Underlying Principles

There are certain principles underlying university education in Qatar, which may be summarized as follows:

1. University education should aim at the preservation and development of Arab and Islamic culture.
2. Other aims of university education include preparation of highly qualified manpower, the advancement of knowledge and the development of the community in general.
3. University education is provided free and no tuition fees are charged.
4. Separation of male and female students should be ensured in every aspect of the University activities.
5. Academic freedom at the University is guaranteed within the Arab and Islamic traditions.
6. Arabic should be the medium of instruction when and where possible.

7. Guaranteed employment of Qataris after graduation is ensured.
8. As a State University, it is financed by the Government from public funds, within the general budget of the State.

Types of Institutions

Since its establishment as a College of Education in 1973, the University of Qatar has grown in size and structure. At present, it comprises five faculties and four research centres.

Faculties: The University faculties are organized on lines similar to and most common in faculty organization in many universities of today. Each faculty is subdivided into departments.

1. The Faculty of Education, known as the "Founding Faculty", was established in 1973 and has nine departments:
 - Foundations of Education
 - Educational Planning
 - Curriculum and Methods of Teaching
 - Educational Psychology
 - Mental Hygiene
 - Educational Technology
 - Home Economics
 - Art Education
 - Physical Education

/4

2. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, established in 1977, has seven departments:

- Arabic Language and Arabic Journalism
- English and Modern European Languages
- Geography and Regional and Urban Planning
- History and Documentation (Library Science)
- Philosophy
- Sociology
- Social Work

3. The Faculty of Science, established in 1978, has seven departments:

- Chemistry
- Physics
- Zoology
- Marine Sciences
- Geology
- Mathematics
- Botany

4. The Faculty of Islamic Studies, established in 1978, has four departments:

- Koranic Studies and "*Hadith*"*
- Islamic Culture

* The sayings of the prophet Mohamed; the second source of Islamic jurisprudence after the Koran

- Islamic Faith and comparative religion
- Islamic Jurisprudence and its sources

5. The Faculty of Engineering (for men only), established in 1980, has four departments:

- Mechanical Engineering
- Civil "
- Electrical "
- Chemical "

Each faculty is headed by a dean, who is elected by the faculty council from among the faculty professors. His formal appointment for a four-year term of office is by Amiri decree, on the recommendation of the University Council. The dean is an ex-officio member of the University Council and also presides over his faculty council, which consists of all heads of the faculty departments as well as some other staff members.

Research Centres

In addition to the five faculties, the University of Qatar has four research centres and an oceanographic research vessel, known as "Mukhtabar Al-bihar". The research centres are

- The Education Research Centre
- The Scientific and Applied Research Centre

- The Research Centre for Humanities and Documentation
- The Research Centre for *Sirra* and *Sunna**

Each research centre is headed by a director, who is appointed for a period of four years by an Amiri decree, on the recommendation of the University Council. All directors of the four research centres -like deans of the faculties- are ex-officio members of the University Council.

Each research centre has a governing Board, headed by the President of the University. The Board is composed of members from the University, representing their respective disciplines, and outside members, representing interested and concerned bodies.

Administrative Mechanisms

The Amir, who is the Ruler of the State, is the Supreme Head of the University. At the top of the administrative echelon of the University is the President, who is appointed by an Amiri decree. In fact, the top administrative mechanisms of the University rest mainly on three bodies:

1. The University Council

The University Council constitutes the final link in the chain of the decision making process and is the highest governing body on all academic, administrative and finan-

* *Sirra*: the biography of the prophet Mohamed
Sunna: the sayings and deeds of the prophet Mohamed, later established as legally binding precedents in addition to the law established by the Koran

cial matters relating to the University. In general, decisions taken by the Council are final. Only in matters of high policy, are the Council decisions subject to the approval of the highest authority, i.e., the University Supreme Head.

The main functions of the University Council are to formulate, supervise and direct the general policy of the University. In addition to the Assistant President, Vice President and Secretary General, the University Council consists in general of the deans of the faculties and directors of the various research centres, as members from the University. There are also members from outside the University, who represent interested and concerned bodies.

2. The Consultative Board of Regents

This Board was formed in 1977. As suggested by the name, it is a consultative body with the responsibility to review, evaluate, organize and assign priorities, in regard to the objectives and present policies for the development of the University. It also recommends policies for the further development of the University and gives advice on the quality of education, in order to meet internationally recognized standards.

This Board, which has the President of the University as its Chairman, consists of members, who represent higher learning institutes in developed countries such as the UK, USA and France, in addition to members representing Arab universities.

3. The Higher Council of Education

This Council, which was formed in 1974 as a bridge between the University and the Ministry of Education, is presided over by the Minister of Education. It includes the President of the University, University professors and other members from the Ministry of Education.

Its main function is to co-ordinate educational matters, which are of interest to both, the University and the Ministry of Education.

Access to University Education

The requirement for admission to the University is a minimum of twelve years of primary and secondary education. A pre-condition is the Certificate of General Secondary Education (GCE). The last two years of secondary education are divided into two sections:

- 1) the literary section
- 2) the scientific section

Both prepare students to receive the GCE. However, while the certificate awarded to those in the scientific section is accepted for admission into all the faculties, that received by the students in the literary section is accepted only for admission into the literary faculties, i.e., Education, Humanities and Islamic Studies. This is generally the case in many universities of the Arab world.

Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two semesters, namely, fall and spring. Each semester extends over a period of 16 weeks. Some summer courses are provided in different areas of specialization.

Programmes, Courses and Degrees

Programmes and courses offered by the University are varied and diversified in order to meet different needs and requirements. The major full-time University programme, in which most students are enrolled, prepares them to specialize in one of the fields of specialization previously mentioned. As the University programmes are organized on the basis of the credit hour system, a total of 144 credit hours is required in order to graduate. Students who successfully complete this programme are granted the degree of B.Sc. or B.A. in their field of specialization.

/10

The other programmes are regulated on a part-time basis and are offered by the Faculty of Education exclusively. One specially tailored programme is offered to primary school teachers employed by the Ministry of Education, in order to help them pursue their studies for the B.Sc. or B.A. degree. The requirements for graduation are similar to those for the major programme mentioned earlier.

Another programme is offered to post primary (i.e. preparatory and secondary) school teachers employed by the Ministry of Education, to qualify them as teachers. A qualified teacher in the Arab education systems, as in many other systems of the world, would mean one who is professionally prepared as a teacher in a special educational institute. Hence, those teachers with B.Sc. or B.A. degrees only and no teacher's education are not considered qualified teachers. Of course, the reasons for employing non-qualified teachers are obvious and most common in many school systems of today. This part-time education programme for teachers calls for 36 credit hours in order to graduate. Students who successfully complete the course are granted the General Diploma in Education, which is similar to the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) in the UK.

/11

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The third part-time course, which is also offered by the Faculty of Education, prepares students for higher studies in education. 22 credit hours are required to graduate. Students who successfully complete the course are awarded the Special Diploma in Education. This Diploma, which is similar to the Academic Diploma in Education in the UK, is a partial fulfilment for further studies in education, such as M.A. or Ph.D., which are not yet available. Plans are already under way to start courses for the Master's and Ph.D. degrees in the future.

Students and Scholarships

The total number of students has risen considerably from about 328 in 1973 to about 3815 in 1983. Approx. 60% of the University students are female. 66% of the student population are nationals.

TABLE (1)

The growth in the total number of students
between 1973 and 1983

Year	M A L E			F E M A L E			T O T A L		
	Qatari	Non Qatari	Total	Qatari	Non Qatari	Total	Qatari	Non Qatari	Total
1973	86	29	115	137	76	213	223	105	328
1983	806	724	1530	1698	587	2285	2504	1311	3815

/12

TABLE (2)

The distribution of students in the various faculties

1983 / 1984

Faculty	Male	Female	Total
The General Course (1st year)	409	604	1013
Education	505	976	1481
Science	176	256	432
Humanities	256	324	580
Islamic Studies	81	125	206
Engineering	103	-	103
Total	1530	2285	3815

The Government awards scholarships to foreign students to pursue their studies at the University. In addition to air fares, these scholarships cover board and lodging and text books.

Future Estimates of Students

According to estimates of the University for the next five years, the total number of students will be 6495 by 1990, of which 4356 will be female. The following table shows the distribution of the total number of students by 1990, according to sex, nationality and general field of specialization:

/13

QATARIS						NON-QATARIS						
Literary Section			Science Section			Literary Section			Science Section			Total
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1316	2178	3494	329	1173	1502	395	653	1048	99	352	451	6495

It is obvious from this table, that the total number of female students will represent slightly more than two-thirds the total number of students and that the non-Qatari students will represent about 30% of the total number.

Graduates

The number of students who have graduated from the University has increased from 117 (38 male and 79 female) in the year 1977 to 594 in 1983. The table below shows the total number of graduates in 1983, according to nationality and sex:

Qatari			Non-Qatari			Total		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
81	278	359	96	139	235	177	417	594

National graduates are employed mostly by the Government. Selecting those with the "right academic qualifications for the right job" is not the case in the Arab States of the Gulf region. With the high demand for highly educated nationals to be assigned to key and important jobs in administration and the various positions in the Government, almost any graduate, regardless of his field of specialization, can be easily employed. Statistical data on manpower shows that the vast majority of nationals occupy administrative and non-technical jobs.

In fact, the country depends heavily on expatriates to fill those posts involving highly professional and semi-skilled jobs. Though the University has one faculty for science and another for engineering, in view of the disinclination on the part of the national students to join these two faculties, this situation is not likely to change in the near future.

Teaching Staff

The total number of teaching staff at the University has also risen from about 32 in 1973 to 183* at the present time. This means that the student-teacher ratio has increased considerably from 10:1 in 1973 to 21:1 in 1983. Most of them are expatriates or non-nationals from various Arab universities, employed on secondment basis. At the moment, only 11 Qataris are staff members.

The University also depends on visiting professors from different universities, who are invited to teach for short periods — usually two months. It may be argued that this kind of arrangement may account for a degree of staff instability. However, the number of permanent staff members is increasing steadily. This does not mean that the problem will soon be solved or even eased. As most, if not all nationals, who get their Ph.D. degrees and join the University staff, are assigned to high administrative jobs, this situation is likely to persist for some years to come.

The quality of our teaching staff is equal to recognized international standards. All staff members are Ph.D. holders. Many, if not most of them, obtained their degrees from universities in advanced countries like the USA, UK, France and Germany.

* This number does not include graduate assistants and assistant lecturers.

One way of building the national teaching staff is by appointing only Qataris as graduate assistants. After spending a year at the University, they are usually sent to study abroad for their Master's and Ph.D. degrees. In 1982/83, the total number of graduate assistants was 129, of which 78 were female (i.e. 62%). The following table shows the number of University graduate assistants studying abroad in various countries (1982/83):

Country	M.A.			Ph.D.			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
USA	10	25	35	8	3	11	18	28	46
UK	9	12	21	5	2	7	14	14	28
Egypt	7	31	38	8	3	11	15	34	49
W. Germany	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1
Switzerland	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	26	69	95	21	9	30	47	78	125

Academic Achievement

The academic achievement of students can, on the whole, be matched with recognized standards of university education in the world, in general, and in the Arab world, in particular. This is partly evident from the fact that many graduates are presently studying

successfully for their Master's and Ph.D. degrees in the USA, UK and Arab countries. It is noteworthy, that recent research has shown the academic achievement of female students at Qatar University to be higher than that of their male counterparts. This is partly due to the fact that many of the best male students, who have completed their secondary education, have the opportunity to study abroad in their fields of specialization, which are not yet available in the University of Qatar. Such a chance for girls, especially at the undergraduate level, is very remote.

The New Campus

Since its establishment in 1973, the University has been temporarily housed in two main buildings originally built as primary schools. In the meantime, a permanent campus was designed by a prominent architect, and construction is at an advanced stage of completion. Speaking of the design, the architect said:

"I do not claim to have produced the perfect design for the University but would rather suggest that this work be seen as the first stage of a continuing architectural study, directed towards a modern expression of Islamic architecture."

/18

Expressing the philosophy behind his design, he went on to say:

"The philosophical basis of my design for the University led me to pose the problem of the conflict between Islamic culture and imported technology in general, and "imported" architecture in particular. On this problem I asked the advice of experts in various fields. I am convinced that research into the effects of this conflict could usefully be one of the principal aims of the new University of the State of Qatar."

The main features of the new University building may be summarized as follows:

- It has special features which make it one of the landmarks of Doha and which identify Qatar with the modern world.
- The ventilation of the building, designed to lower temperature as well as humidity, is based on a study of the traditional science of natural ventilation, obtained through "wind-towers", typical of the Arab countries.
- To control the strong sunlight, the architect has employed traditional Arab methods: indirect lighting, overhead openings diffusing light downwards, windows opening onto shaded areas and light filtered through traditional "mushrabiya" screens.

/19

- The separation of the sexes, which is the practice in Qatar's educational system, has been a very important element in the design of the University. Complete separation has been envisaged in certain areas; in other areas, different parts of a given building will be used at the same time by both sexes. In some cases, the entire building will be used by one or the other sex, at scheduled times.
- The courtyards, both open and partially covered, are very important elements of the University design. They provide connections and circulation spaces within the University complex, as well as areas for social and general, informal activities. With their gardens and fountains, the courtyards will afford pleasant areas of coolness and shade.
- The wind-tower structures, which are one of the most outstanding features of the University, also provide the cover of the University buildings. These shapes are the result of the use of traditional Arab architectural devices, adapted for use with modern technology, for the purpose of providing cool air and reducing humidity inside the buildings.
- The University library with the "sunlight towers" is another main architectural feature of the University buildings. The inspiration for these towers, which are a source of natural, indirect lighting, has come from traditional Arab architecture.

REFERENCES

- Al-Kobaisi, A. *The Development of Education in Qatar*. Ph.D. thesis, Durham University, 1979
- Morsi, M.M. *Contemporary University Education: Trends and Issues*. Cairo: Alnahdat Al Arabia Bookshop, 1977 (In Arabic)
- . *Public Education in the Arab World*. Cairo: Alam Al-Kutub Bookshop, 1972 (In Arabic)
- State of Qatar. Law No. 2 for 1977 regarding the establishment of the University of Qatar.
- Ministry of Education, State of Qatar. *The Educational Policy of Qatar*. (In Arabic)
- UNESCO. *World Guide to Higher Education (A Comparative Survey of Systems, Degrees and Qualifications)*. Paris: Bowker Publishing Company, 1976.
- University of Qatar Educational Research Centre. *Report on the Academic Achievement Levels of Qatar University Students. A Follow-up Report*. May 1983.
- . *Motivation Achievement among female University students*. 1982. (In Arabic)

مركز
البحوث التربوية